

**78th Annual Meeting of**  
**The Grosse Pointe Congregational Church**  
 March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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**GROSSE POINTE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**77<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 19, 2017**

The 77<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was called to order in the Church Fellowship Hall at 11:15 am on Sunday, March 19, 2017 by Moderator, Petersen Decker. A quorum was present. Pastor Richard gave an opening prayer.

**A motion was made by Lori Zurvalec and seconded by Katherine Baetz to accept the Minutes from the March 13, 2016 Annual Meeting as written; the motion passed unanimously.**

**REPORTS:**

**REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK:**

The report of Betty Allor, Church Clerk, appears on page 7 of the Annual Report.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:**

The report of Pastor Richard Yeager-Stiver appears on pages 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Annual Report. He said 23 new members have been added in the last 36 months; gave the number of 2016 online sermon downloads from our website and, while acknowledging that the downloads taper off at year end, said an average of over 250 people listened to the Sunday sermon; he welcomed David Hands, Katherine Baetz and Jeri Gleichauf to the Pastoral Relations Committee; said an informational video broadcast will be shown each Sunday while he is on sabbatical; and said educational programs, based on his experiences during the sabbatical, will be offered when he returns.

**MODERATOR'S REPORT:**

The report of Moderator, Petersen Decker, appears on pages 12 and 13 of the Annual Report.

**STEWARD OF BUILDING AND GROUNDS:**

The report of Alan Wright, Steward of Building and Grounds, appears on page 14 of the Annual Report.

### STEWARD OF MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION:

The report of Aaron Tavalire, Steward of Membership and Communication, appears on page 15 of the Annual Report.

### STEWARD OF OUTREACH:

The report of Diane Strickler, Steward of Outreach, appears on pages 16, 17 and 18 of the Annual Report. Diane thanked all the members for their generous giving of time and money to the outreach projects.

### STEWARD OF WORSHIP:

The report of Steward of Worship, Lori Zurvalec, appears on pages 19 and 20 of the Annual Report. Lori thanked Christie Declercq for her many years of service in preparing the communion elements and asked for someone to replace Christie. She said the Arts Ministry photo exhibit, which will conclude on March 26, will be followed by an exhibit of the works of Carol LaChiusa DiSanto and Jack Frakes beginning April 6.

### STEWARD OF YOUTH MINISTRIES:

The report of Steward of Youth Ministries, Lynne Millies, appears on page 21 of the Annual Report.

### STEWARD OF FINANCE REPORT:

The report of John Broman, Steward of Finance, appears as an insert to the Annual Report together with his report as Treasurer. John thanked everyone on the Finance team including the counters, the financial secretary (Cathy Leverenz), the assistant financial secretary (Karen Horn), Laurie Schmidt for her work in preparing checks, the Moderator (Petersen Decker) for the time he spent in signing checks, John Ratsek for his work with payroll, Bryan Peterson for the work he did on check reconciliation, to Pastor Richard and to the entire Finance Committee. John described how recommendations from the Finance Committee go to the Board of Stewards, how incoming funds are handled and how the General Operating Fund, Endowment Fund and New Beginnings Fund are kept separate and used as guidelines in allocations.

The Balance Sheet (insert page 1) shows fixed assets unchanged during 2016 and year-end total assets of \$2,663,643. Memorial funds (insert page 2) represent monies given in memory of someone and which are used according to the wishes of the family. Undesignated memorial funds went into New Beginnings, which has a \$62,789 balance as of year-end (insert page 1). The reconciliation of deposits to checks and withdrawals (pages 9-10) balanced. The Fund Activity Report (insert pages 2-3) shows a beginning balance (what we had), less what we spent and an ending balance (what we have left). The Treasurer's Report (insert page 4) showed a 3% increase in staff salaries; all staff

members had good reviews. Pastor Richard's salary is in compliance with UCC guidelines. John mentioned the possibility of having to purchase a new copier/printer at an estimated cost of between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Yearly expenses (insert pages 5-7) which were budgeted at \$226,790 totaled \$226,425. Income for 2016 totaled \$171,000; after payment of salaries, Board of Steward and administrative expenses, the deficit (projected at \$75,000) was actual \$55,000. The Finance Committee has recommended that \$100,000 be set aside in a money market account to cover potential deficits for the next three years. \$39,000 was used from the Endowment Fund (insert page 8) for property and technology expenses. The new church windows were the largest expense; the church restroom expenses were less than budgeted. Money has been budgeted for a 2017 financial review.

The Schwab account at Sigma Investments had a January 2016 beginning account value of \$1,585,731 and a yearend account value of \$1,664,995.93. John said the Board of Stewards supported the Financial Committee's recommendation to set aside funds to support the Church operations during the New Beginnings effort. He also provided background on the account, describing how it began and why the services are provided to GPCC at no charge.

Expenses in 2016 of \$226,425 exceeded income of \$171,349, resulting in a deficit of \$55,076, rather than the \$75,000 that was budgeted. Income for 2017 is projected at \$135,179 (insert page 12) and expenses at \$227,748 (insert page 15) for an estimated loss in 2017 of \$92,569.

The Endowment Fund budget (insert page 16) shows a \$20,000 allocation for updates to the parsonage kitchen and \$7,000 for work on the church steeple; the steeple will either be repainted or vinyl sided. It is hoped the kitchen remodeling can be done during Pastor Richard's 90 day sabbatical. John reminded everyone that the cost for Pastor Richard's sabbatical is coming from a \$14,000 memorial gift which was designated for that purpose.

The New Beginnings budget (insert page 17) of \$33,752 includes the salaries for the Art Ministry Director and the Art Ministry Teacher and for the Food Ministry and the Deaf Ministry.

**A motion was made by Lori Zurvalec and seconded by David DeVries to approve the General Operating Fund, Endowment and New Beginnings budgets as presented; there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.**

Petersen Decker expressed the appreciation of everyone to John Broman for all the work he does in handling the finances of GPCC.

#### ARTS MINISTRY REPORT:

The report of Lori Zurvalec, Arts Ministry Committee Chairperson, appears on page 22 of the Annual Report.

#### DEAF COMMUNITY MINISTRY REPORT:

The report of Paul Fugate of the Deaf Community Ministry appears on page 23 of the Annual Report.

#### PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:

The report of Mark Gawel of the Pastoral Relations Committee appears on page 24 of the Annual Report.

#### HISTORIAN REPORT:

The report of Tom Rockwell, Historian, appears on page 25 of the Annual Report.

#### COLUMBARIUM REPORT:

The report of the Columbarium Committee appears on page 26 of the Annual Report.

#### AMONG FRIENDS REPORT:

The report of co-coordinators, Skip and Martha Schwartzberg, of Among Friends appears on page 27 of the Annual Report.

#### USHERS REPORT:

The report of Alan Wright, Ushers Committee, appears on page 28 of the Annual Report.

#### THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP REPORT:

The Women's Fellowship Report appears as an insert to the Annual Report. It includes the slate for 2017; the report of co-chairpersons, Emma Wright and Kathy Frakes; the 2017 Budget; the report of Pat Johnstone, Spiritual Life; the report of Martha Schwartzberg and Lynne Millies of the Martha Committee; the fund-raising report of Kathy Frakes; the report of Sandi Cook, publicity chair; the report of Cathy Leverenz, Signs and Graphics; the report of Mary Lou Uridge, card liaison; the program chair report; and the report of Lori Zurvalec for Knit Wits Too.

#### AFFIRMATION OF MODERATOR:

Moderator, Petersen Decker, asked that the Board of Stewards' appointment of Ed Priebe as Vice-Moderator be affirmed. **A motion was made by Lori Zurvalec, seconded by Katherine Baetz and passed unanimously to affirm the appointment of Ed Priebe as Vice-Moderator for the term ending March 2017.**

**NOMINATIONS TO BOARD OF STEWARDS:**

Moderator, Petersen Decker, asked for approval to the following nominations to the Board of Stewards:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>
David DeVries	Steward of Buildings and Grounds	March 2017-2019
Rick Hawley	Steward of Music (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	March 2017-2019

**A motion was made by Katherine Baetz and seconded by Mary Lou Uridge to affirm the nomination of David DeVries and Rick Hawley to the Board of Stewards for the period March 2017 to March 2019; there being no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.** Ed was welcomed as Moderator with thanks given to Craig Baetz and Alan Wright for their past services.

Petersen Decker asked if anyone had any other comments. Ron Strickler said we should find ways to grow our finances; Peter-John Parisi asked that if on-line giving is begun he be provided with a link so he can include it in his reports; and there was a comment in a letter from a member that the salary of the custodian be increased. Peter-John Parisi said he could put our wish list on the website; however, someone should become the contact person to handle these requests.

Petersen Decker gave closing remarks, thanking all those who have and continue to serve.

Pastor Richard said the Food Ministry meals will continue throughout the summer and offered a closing prayer.

There being no other business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned by Moderator, Ed Priebe.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Ann Mullaney  
Recording Secretary

Annual Report of the  
Church Clerk for 2017

Church Membership as of January 1, 2017	200
Received into Membership	7
Removed from Membership	8
Church Membership as of December 31, 2017	199

Friends of the Church who passed away in 2017

Evelyn Fergle  
Carolyn Wilson  
Robert (Bob) Martin

Pastoral Services

Funerals	4
Baptisms	3
Inurnments	<u>1</u>
Total	8

Betty Allor  
Church Clerk

Dear Friends,

### **SERVICE AND SABBATICAL**

In 2017, I oversaw 4 funerals for members, 3 baptisms, and installed 7 new members. I also spent 94 days on Sabbatical, and during that time I attended two weeks of Spiritual and Christian growth at the Iona Community in Scotland. Spoke to several pastors about church vitality and history in London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and I did early Christian research by visiting several museums in the United Kingdom and visiting the home of John Knox, leader of the Scottish Protestant Reformation.

I also attended the Wild Goose Conference in North Carolina, the Simply Jesus Conference in Colorado, a *Okán* service observed by the Blackfoot Confederacy (Blackfeet, Blackfoot, Kanai (Blood) and Apa'tosee tribes) in Montana, and a week-long Mediation and Reconciliation course for Church leaders at the Lombard Peace Institute in Illinois.

I led 43 Worship services: 37 Sundays, 2 Christmas Eve services, 1 Ash Wednesday Service, 1 Maundy Thursday service, 1 Pentecost Celebration and 1 Interfaith Thanksgiving service.

Through sermons and letters published in the Comment I have shared some of my experiences of my Sabbatical, including my God-moments on the island of Maul and a close-encounter with two elk.

Preparing for Sabbatical, I worked closely with Laurie Schmidt and Lori Zurvalec to ensure the pulpit had speakers for each week, and I worked with guest speakers to ensure they had their scripture readings and sermon titles submitted prior to my departure. I appreciate Lori Zurvalec's leadership regarding leading worship and meeting guest speakers when they arrived at church for a problem-free worship service.

While away, I remained in contact with Rev. Jacquie Patt about the care our members needed while I was away. Though unusual for a pastor to be in touch at home while on Sabbatical, I chose to call members who needed guidance or prayer with me; specifically, I was able to pray over the phone with Carolyn Wilson the night before she died, and then I followed up with her son, Rick Wilson, while he grieved; with follow-up calls regarding the spiritual care Rev. Patt was able to provide him.

### **TRIP TO ISRAEL**

At the end of 2016, Rabbi Joe Klein and I discussed the 2015 UCC Resolution regarding peace in Israel and Palestine. This Resolution was the 21<sup>st</sup> written by General Synod attendees. The first one was written in 1967. The UCC has addressed, through written resolutions, for the need for peace in the Middle East. In 2014, when the Lutheran (ELCA), Presbyterian (USA) and United Methodist Churches created a resolution that sought a strategy to create peace between Israel and Palestine, members of the UCC sent to the General Conference a query for the 2015 General Synod to create a strategy as well.



What resulted was a Resolution that called for a fourfold strategy by the United Church of Christ to help end the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the Resolution recommended that every UCC congregation do the following:

1. Study the Kairos Palestine 2009 paper, “A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope and Love form the Heart of Palestinian Suffering.”
2. Examine your investments and faithfully explore if we wish to divest from companies that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories
3. Petition Congress to ensure that aid to Israel violates neither the US Foreign Assistance Act nor the US Arms Export Control Act; and
4. Hold interreligious dialogue among the three Abrahamic faiths aimed at reaching an understanding of each other.

After a discussion with Rabbi Joe Klein about this resolution, we decided to hold an educational forum for anyone interested in knowing more about the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict. Rabbi Klein admitted that the conflict, was from his point of view, but he also named several challenges the region faces. It was from this and other conversations I held with Rabbi Klein that led him to offer his expertise to guide a group this summer (2018) to the Holy Land so that we can visit Israel and Palestine, thus holding interreligious dialogue among the three Abrahamic faiths, and this trip will allow us to understand each other better. We still have space on the trip if you are interested in traveling to the Holy Land this August. Please see me as soon as possible so we can get your registration submitted.

## **NEW BEGINNINGS MINISTRIES**

As per the discussions a few years ago, we wanted to embrace an art ministry and this summer we completed and opened dedicated space for an art gallery. This is a wonderful outreach ministry as poets, musicians and artists gather to share their work with each other in God's holy home.

We also wanted to begin a food ministry to feed our neighbors, and Darlynn Pierzynski began a Wednesday night dinner and Wednesday afternoon lunch. If you have not attended a meal, we hope this year you will come eat with us.

We also wanted to explore adopting or working with a congregation – and boy, God has a great sense of humor, as well as a way of preparing us for that God had in store: Whosoever Ministries United Church of Christ.

Whosoever Ministries UCC used to rent the space from the Ecumenical Theological Seminary for their worship services, however, when the building was sold, the Whosoever Ministries needed a new home, and after they discovered that we had become an Open and Affirming Congregation, they approached us on June 5, 2017 for discussions about their ability to rent space for their congregation's needs. I believe this has been good for both our congregations. Our building is utilized nearly every day and we have done some ministries together (eg. Rummage Sale, Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, Ash Wednesday) with a shared goal: to reach out to our neighbors and share the Gospel.

In addition, it has been wonderful for me because Rev. Dr. Selma Massey and I carpool to different UCC events, which allows us an opportunity to discuss what our congregations are doing and how we can enrich each other's lives.

## **MY APPRECIATION**

I appreciate the service given by the Stewards, especially those who have served for the last four transformative years of our church. Thank you, Lori Zurvalec, John Broman, Diane Strickler, Aaron Tavalire, Rick Hawley, and Petersen Decker. As we begin a new year, I look forward to the blossoming ministries we have, as well as many new projects that are forthcoming with our current Moderator, Ed Priebe, and our Vice-Moderator, Peter Caborn. I also look forward to serving with our new board of Stewards, especially as we, possibly, embark on our building project and discover how our new board arrangement will serve our needs for this coming year and the years going forward.

Thank you everyone for your contributions to moving my office to a new location, one that has been effective in having meetings when other rooms are being used, and this office puts me closer to activities in the building so that I am accessible to everyone who utilizes our building.

## **BUILDING PROJECT**

To borrow an image Lori Zurvalec provided at our February Board of Stewards meeting when we discussed the pending vote for embarking on the Welcoming Everyone Building Project (WEBP), she said “We have become a congregation with open arms, ready and willing to embrace all people. However, our building has not come along with us.” As we know, our current building creates barriers and our layout with different levels prevents people from fully enjoying the beauty of our space. Therefore, we need our building to come along, with us, and open its arms to embrace all people.... I wonder what I will be reporting at our Annual Meeting next year?

## **2017 STATISTICS MARCH 2017 – FEBRUARY 2017**

Potential new member visits

10

Nursing Home visits

14

Visitations (lunch, dinner, regular home visit) with members

31

Communion with homebound

7

Grosse Pointe Ministerial Association Meeting

2

Funeral Services (members/nonmembers)

5

Hospital (ER, ICU, other)  
18

God bless you all as we prayerfully consider and discover what God has in store for us yet,

Rev. Richard Yeager-Stiver

## Moderator's Annual Report March 2018

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We are from all walks of life and from many parts of the journey. Our common faith brings us together to share and care for each other. The Congregational part of our name means that we are truly an organization that is governed by the people it serves.

Articles of Incorporation:

"The purpose for which this Church is organized is to worship and labor together as a church according to the faith and usage of the churches commonly called Congregational Christian."

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We are remarkably indebted to the discipleship and energies of our Church volunteers and professional staff and, in particular, our Pastor's tireless leadership. Each selflessly guides our great Church to God and to the greater good.

We have witnessed their amazing accomplishment over the past year, and we are enriched because of them.

We recognize the talents and drive of our Board of Stewards, appointees, committees, and so many others. They are second to none. They embody the depth of God's grace within and beyond our Church proper. Their accomplishment is nothing short of outstanding, among them are:

Steward of Finance	John Broman
Steward of Worship	Lori Zurvalec
Steward of Music	Rick Hawley
Steward of Outreach	Diane Strickler
Steward of Youth Ministries	Lynn Millies
Steward of Membership & Communications	Aaron Tavalire
Steward of Buildings & Grounds	David Devries
Past Moderator	Peterson Decker
Recording Secretary	Pat Mullaney
Financial Secretary	Cathy Leverenz
Assistant Financial Secretary	Karen Horn
Audio Visual Support	Walker Archer
Office Administrator	Laurie Schmidt
Business Administrator	Kris Hummel
Church Clerk	Betty Allor
Historian	Tom Rockwell

Pastoral Relations'	Jeri Gleichauf, Katherine Baetz & Dave Hands
Deaf Ministry's	Paul Fugate & Kevin Hogan
Arts Ministry	Lori Zurvalec & Tamara Whitty
Knit Wits Too	Lori Zurvalec
Calling & Caring	Kathy Frakes and Emma Wright
Director of Arts Ministry	Tamara Whitty
Director of Choir & Hand bells	Tamara Whitty & Choirs
Organist	Georgia Wrinkle
Comment Editor	Georgia Wrinkle
Among Friends'	Skip and Martha Schwartzberg
Women's Fellowship	Emma Wright & Kathy Frakes
Crossroads'	Phyllis Osler
Red Sweater Committee	David Devries & Wei-Zen Wei
Ushers Committee	Alan Wright & team
Our Columbarium Committee	Margy Penirian
Sanctuary Flowers'	Sandi Cook
Our 'Distributor'	Mary Lou Uridge
Coffee Hour's	Nancy Peterson & Kathy Frakes
Christmas Workshop	Jeri Gleichauf
Community Potluck	Darlynne Pierzynski

And those who have helped with: Our Collection Committee, Bible Verse Readings, Service as an Offertory Counter, and our Communion Servers.  
Rev. Richard and Karen Yeager-Stiver

You have all made my year as Moderator a joy and a pleasure. Together we are our Church. Your example is honorable, and although we rely upon you all too heavily, you continue to reach out and inspire and serve all things good for Christ. You continue to provide us New Beginnings, new Ministries, and the wherewithal for growth and action and foresight.

We acknowledge and support all of our Church's leaders and volunteers, their wonderful and new ways to achieve God's mission, their sacrifice for others. Our gratitude to them knows no bounds.

Ed Priebe  
2017-2018 Moderator, Board of Stewards

## **2017 Annual Report for Building, Grounds and Parsonage**

In 2017, several major projects along with several smaller and on- going projects were completed inside and outside the church and at the parsonage as well.

- Pastor Richard's office was relocated to the former nursery, from his office adjacent to the main office and the sanctuary. The renovation of Richard's new office includes built in shelving and closet space along with new furniture and a new floor.
- The art gallery was created downstairs in the former teen haven room. This effort includes repurposing of the space, new dry wall and a new floor. This is a dedicated room used solely for the arts ministry, its exhibits and gatherings.
- The kitchen at the parsonage underwent a complete renovation in Summer/Fall that includes new cabinets, counter tops, appliances and a new floor. There were additional plumbing updates as well.
- New shrubbery on the church grounds is an ongoing effort. New evergreens were planted in the front of church. This project will be completed in Spring, 2018.
- The front stairs of the church required tuckpointing and this was complete in the Fall. There was a new slab of concrete poured outside the elevator door to ensure safety of everyone using that entrance.
- Maintenance projects include elevator repair, electrical (lighting) repairs in the sanctuary and in the church building. The sprinkling system has been repaired several times to fix an underground leak out front of church near the wayside pulpit. We will know in the Spring that the fix worked. Leveling of the ground will be required at that time with new seed or sod put down.
- Ongoing effort to throw out/remove obsolete, outdated or otherwise unused and unclaimed 'stuff' from the church building. Full inventory of church property is underway as of this writing.

### Future Projects

- Kitchen Vent fan repair (church)
- Painting of church steeple
- Repair, repaint several wall areas in sanctuary and Lounge
- Parsonage Fence

David DeVries/K. Hummel

## Steward of Membership and Communications Report for 2017

It has been an exciting year and a pleasure to serve my fourth and final year on the Board of Stewards as the Steward of Membership and Communications. This past year has been a time of growth and learning at Grosse Pointe Congregational Church, expanding our presence in the community through Arts and Ministry and with the continued implementation of our New Beginnings projects. The focus of the past year has been that of establishing and building upon our current identity in the church and examining how that identity will define our future endeavors, including directions in which we may move.

The overall goal of the next year is to increase the visibility of our church in the surrounding communities, on which we have great momentum. Some of the following objectives have been put into place in the past year, and will continue into 2018. Some objectives will be new initiatives in order to increase visibility.

- Objectives:
1. Attend a church marketing program
  2. Sponsorship of local school groups/scholarships, etc.
  3. Ads/direct mailings
  4. Sending follow up cards to visitors
  5. Continued ONA advertising
  6. Social dinners and events – publicize

Reaching a new audience has at one level become easier with the advent of social media, but at the same time has become more difficult in traditional manners such as local print advertisements, as the growing younger residents of the area are less inclined to read the local papers. 2018 will bring new options to the table with the results of our church-wide survey and the implementation that has already begun of the New Beginnings Initiative.

In 2017 we added 3 new members to the congregation and performed 1 baptism.

From events such as our blossoming Arts Ministry, to upcoming potential new advertising mediums in the community, I have looked at options to not only grow our congregation from a membership standpoint, but also examined ways of growing our presence in the community.

Throughout the year, events and activities have been promoted via news clips and advertisements in the Grosse Pointe News, the majority of which were free of cost and written as announcements of upcoming events in the “calendar” section. The Arts Ministry was also featured numerous times with more in-depth articles in both the GP Times and News.

I would first like to thank the congregation for the opportunity to represent the interests of the church, as well as the Board of Stewards for their support and knowledge.

I look forward to growing our church family in the coming years and welcoming more and more new faces into our congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Aaron Tavalire

## **Annual Outreach Committee Report for 2017**

In support of Grosse Pointe Congregational Church's mission of RISE, members did 'reach out' and 'serve others' both locally and globally through our outreach ministry.

**Shelter:** Locally, through Samaritas, we assisted a refugee family new to America with household furnishings, as well as low income citizens through Cass Social Services' Tiny Homes Project in Detroit. A gift to the Coalition for Temporary Shelter and the Detroit Rescue Mission addressed homelessness. Globally we sent a gift to UNICEF to help with settling refugees and educating children.

**Hunger:** We addressed food insecurity supporting not only our own food ministry program but Forgotten Harvest and Kids Against Hunger. Your weekly donations of food to the Crossroads Food Pantry totaled 1394 pounds of food in 2017, well over our goal of 100 pounds per month! We hosted the 2017 Crop Walk which raised funds for the Gleaners Backpack Program and Crossroads as well as the global outreach of Church World Service.

**Emotional Well Being/Health:** We sent adults and children to camp (Kids on the Go, Fowler Center and Camp Talahi) for outdoor fun and to continue needed therapeutic support. Our new deaf ministry is being built. A gift was sent to the Foster Care Coalition as well as Full Circle, Mariners Inn, Northeast Guidance and the Judson Center.

**Education:** The Devries fundraiser to support the Red Sweater Project raised approximately \$15,000 to provide scholarships to students in Tanzania. The Family Center continues to educate families on current, relevant issues affecting our children, seniors and family life and to support our community members with referrals at times of family crisis. We continue to provide funding for our UCC seminaries (CUE) and the Friends of Kenyan Orphans.

We provided goods from home to our overseas soldiers, toys to Detroit families unable to provide Christmas for their children, funds to the United Church of Christ's Disaster Relief Fund, Open and Affirming Ministry, One Great Hour of Sharing, Our Church's Wider Mission and the Christmas Fund.

Seven members of the church met at Memorial Church to help package food for Kids Against Hunger. Members from 9 churches plus Rotarians joined us as we departed GPCC on the Crop Walk we hosted in May. (\$13,457 was raised.)

Other areas of outreach included 2 scholarships to GPCC graduates, 56 volunteers at our rummage sale (including 8 members of Whosoever UCC) and the donation of 53 mittens, 52 hats, 15 scarves and 38 pairs of socks from the Mitten Tree to keep clients of Crossroads, the Capuchin Center and children at Poupard School warm.

As witnessed in this report and the attached spreadsheet showing our gifts, our congregation remains very generous. As we continue to support and grow several New Beginnings ministries, arts, deaf, and food, our outreach will grow.

My sincere thanks to Phyllis and John Osler and to David Stanley Hands for their weekly commitment to Crossroads and to Catherine Fly, Allison Gudenau, Cathy Leverenz, Darlynne Pierzynski and Wendy Evans

for their valued assistance on our Outreach Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Strickler, Steward of Outreach



Recipient Organizations	Church Outreach 2017 (special offerings/end of year giving	Women's Fellowship	Knit Wits Too	Noisy Sunday
Alzheimer's Association		200		
Camp Talahi	191			
Cass SS - Tiny Homes	560			
Coalition Temporary Shelter	322			
CWS Crop Walk	2180			
Crossroads	604	500		
CUE-UCC Seminaries	250			
Detroit Rescue Mission	500	100		
Doctors without Borders	500			
Evangelical Homes	250			
Family Center	500	200		
Focus Hope		200		
Foster Care Coalition	200			
Forgotten Harvest	500			
Fowler Center	191	200		
Friends of GP Library		100		
Friends of Kenyan Orphans	250			
Friends of Vison		200		
Friendship House			771	
Full Circle	250			
Gleaners	200			
GP Military Moms	573			
GPCC Arts Ministry	314			
GPCC Deaf Ministry	278			
GPCC Food Ministry	150			
Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption				100
Heifer International				100
Juson Center	250			
Kids on the Go	500			
Mariners Inn	250			
Mercy Education Project		200		
MI Humane Society				100
Northeast Guidance Center	500			
Paws with a Cause		200		
Red Sweater Project **		500		
Ronald McDonald House		100		
Salvation Army	300	200		
Samaritas	1492			
Seedlings		100		

Services for Older Citizens		500		
Special Olympics		100		
Trinity Toy Box (Christmas)	307			
Turning Point		200		
UCC Christmas Fund	603			
UCC Disaster Relief	200			
UCC One Great Hour of Sharing	240			
UCC Open & Affirming Coalition	250			
UCC Our church's Wider Mission	500			
UCC Women of Michigan		100		
Unicef	242			
Well Spring	300			
Wounded Warriors		200		
World Medical Relief		100		
YWCA Interim House		200		
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>14697</u></b>	<b><u>4400</u></b>	<b><u>771</u></b>	<b><u>300</u></b>
Scholarships	1000			

\*GP Crop Walk raised  
\$13,457.00

\*\*DeVries Red Sweater  
Fundraiser

Gleaners and Crossroads each received \$1615.00 through CWS

\$15,000-\$17-000

## Report of the Steward of Worship for 2017

The Steward of Worship oversees a number of functions at the church, including worship, coffee hour, Final Feasts, as well as the hallway seasonal arrangements, the showcase, and decorations for Christmas.

Thanks to Rev. Yeager-Stiver for all the effort he puts into his ministry with GPCC. I have enjoyed our minister/layperson collaborations.

In 2017, because of Rev. Yeager-Stiver's Sabbatical, scheduled vacation and bereavement leave, there were over four months' worth of Sundays in which lay leadership was needed to guide the service through to the point where the guest speakers took over. It was a challenge and a joy to take on that task. This congregation was wonderfully tolerant of the quirks and twists that cropped up over the course of those services.

In addition to Sunday services, an Ash Wednesday service was held March 1, followed by a Maundy Thursday service on April 13. The annual Thanksgiving Interfaith Service with the GP Jewish Council was held Nov 20. Attendance has expanded each year of this interfaith program, and it was a blessing to have Whosoever Ministry join in what turned out to be a particularly uplifting, joyful service. Because of increased attendance, the reception following the Interfaith Service was held in Fellowship Hall. Thank you to those who provided sweets for that reception.

The fourth annual All-Church Christmas Pageant was held on December 17. I am grateful to all those who participated, in particular to Rev. Yeager-Stiver for adapting the script used for the pageant, "Animals at the Christmas Scene." Some awesome Cows, Dog, Pig, Owl, Camel, Sheep, Donkey, Chicken, and Cat gave us an important message about the important role each of us has to play in God's plan.

Beginning in January 2017, Poetry Sunday, occurring on the second Sunday of each month, enriched our worship experience. Thank you to all those who read poems. Copies of all the poems are on display in the showcase.

The task of scheduling Communion Servers, Scripture Readers, and Advent Candle Lighters is made infinitely easier by a wonderful group of volunteers. Thank you to all of you; your service enriches our worship and is an enormous blessing to this church.

I am grateful to all those who sign up to serve at Coffee Hour and who willingly accept their assignment as Final Feast hosts. When we gather after worship, talk together over coffee, tea and a snack, or sit down across from one another at tables in Fellowship Hall for Final Feast, we get to know each other, we build community, become friends, and strengthen our church family ties.

Darlynne Pierzynski deserves special recognition and thanks for agreeing to take on the responsibility of preparing the Communion elements each month.

Thank you to Alan Wright for chairing the Usher Committee and to all the persons who usher each week. New ushers are always welcome. *Please note women are welcome to usher!* Thank you to Sandy Cook for supervising the Altar Flowers, including the Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies. Thank you to Kathy Frakes and Emma Wright for visiting our GPCC shut-ins and for supervising the Shut-in Valentine Bag project.

Over the course of the four years that I served as Steward of Worship, it became evident to me that by-law changes needed to occur to reflect the true duties of a Steward of Worship. For that reason, I rewrote the by-laws covering Worship and Music. With two staff persons devoted to Music, our Organist and Choir Director, it was clear that Music needed very little guidance, and the position of Steward of Music could easily be folded into Worship. Music is an integral part of our Praise and Worship, it makes sense that they should be combined.

I often joked over those four years that I was in reality the Steward of Worship *and* Food. While I believe breaking bread together is an important way for Christians to feel the presence of God among us, worship, focusing on what occurs in the Sanctuary, needs to be separated from tasks related to food. For that reason, I proposed to the Board of Stewards the creation of a Steward of Fellowship. The Steward of Fellowship will oversee the activities of the congregation that occur outside the sanctuary, such as Coffee Hour, Final Feasts, the Showcase, Bulletin Boards, the decoration of the church for holidays, and events such as the Christmas Family Workshop. It also makes sense for the Steward of Fellowship to shepherd the New Beginnings ministries. I see the Steward of Fellowship as the Church Mom or Dad, taking care of the aspects of church life that help us feel like a *family*. I am grateful that the Board of Stewards reviewed these proposed changes, made suggestions for improving the language, and accepted the revised proposal to be voted on during the upcoming Annual Meeting.

It has been my hope that in worship we can share in the glory and grace of God together, and that we will depart the sanctuary feeling refreshed and strengthened in our lives as Christians in a truly challenging world.

God bless our church and each member of our church family.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lori Zurvalec, Steward of Worship

## Steward of Youth Ministries Annual Report 2017

The year began with one student attending Sunday School.

Once again, during the summer months a team attended to Meg's Garden. The Fly family, Anna Wuerfel, Pat Mullaney, Diane Strickler, John Broman, Kathy Frakes, Darlynn Pierzynski, Jean Carlyle, Margaret Boucher, the Gudenau family and Lynne Millies helped water and weed on a weekly basis. I apologize if I left anyone off the list. Thank you for your help.

In the fall we no longer had anyone attending Sunday School. Twice a family visited with their young children, and there was Sunday School for them. Near the end of the summer the equipment from the nursery was moved to the second floor and the room is now the Pastor's office.

Plans are being considered to change the name of the Steward of Youth Ministries to be renamed Steward of Christian Education to encompass programs for the whole congregation. If you have an idea or suggestion for "new beginnings" please see me.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Millies

## 2017 Report on the GPCC Arts Ministry

2017 marked the first full year of Arts Ministry<sup>1</sup> at Grosse Pointe Congregational Church. Unused space was renovated into a beautiful art gallery with track lighting and a hanging system. Fellowship Hall was turned into a twinkling, inviting place to enjoy music and refreshments during receptions. The church has overflowed with creativity and celebration of the gifts of God!

### Art Exhibitions at GPCC:

*Two Views of Our World: Photographs of John Osler & David Stanley Hands,*  
January 26 – March 26.

*Our World: Real and Imagined: Works by Carol LaChiusa & Jack Frakes,*  
April 6 - May 14.

*GPCC Saturday Art Class Exhibition,*  
May 20 – June 10.

*Small Wonders Juried Art Exhibition,*  
June 25 – September 10.

This exhibition was the first open call for entry for the Arts Ministry program. Works were limited to 12 inches by 12 inches or smaller. Artists from Grand Rapids, Port Huron, Ann Arbor, metro Detroit and the Pointes submitted work.

*Songs of Praise & Peace: Works by Tamm Whitty & Lori Zurvalet,*  
September 13 – November 12

*Call & Response: Poets and Artists in Dialogue,*  
November 19, 2017 – January 28, 2018.

Fourteen artists and twelve poets collaborated on this exhibition. A reception was held November 30; a poetry reading and discussion forum was held January 11, 2018. This exhibition was the first held in the newly renovated gallery space created out of the former Choir/Teen Haven Room. The response from the artists, poets, and community was very appreciative. Artists and poets came from as far away as Saginaw, St. Clair Shores, Royal Oak, and Franklin, Tennessee. An effort was made to include the Whosoever Ministry, who recommended an artist from their congregation. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 87. Some of the poetry was written in Farsi. In addition, GPCC published a book including all the poetry and artwork. Over 220 copies of the book have been sold or distributed. It was a phenomenal and far-reaching event.

Articles about these exhibitions appeared in the *Grosse Pointe Times*, the *Grosse Pointe News*, and the *Macomb Daily*. There was good attendance by members of the GPCC

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<sup>1</sup> During the New Beginnings process that occurred in 2016, some of the small groups discussed an arts ministry or the incorporation of more art in all of its manifestations into the church's worship and work. This idea was discussed by the leaders of the small groups. It was brought before the Board of Stewards at its September 7, 2016 meeting and discussed at the September 25 All Church New Beginnings meeting. Enough congregational support was offered at the September 25 meeting for the Board of Stewards to go forward with establishing an Arts Ministry at GPCC.

At its October 5 and November 2, 2016 meetings, the Board decided to hire Tamm Whitty as the Director of Arts Ministry, established an Arts Ministry committee, and provided initial funding for Arts Ministry endeavors.

congregation. Also, members of the public attended after receiving personal invitations, postcard announcements, or reading about them in the papers or online.

Live music, either jazz or classical, accompanied the receptions held for these exhibitions.

### **Art classes & Workshops:**

Saturday Art classes for Detroit school children who attended the Arts Therapy program at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen began Saturday, January 21, 2017. The first six week session was followed by a brief hiatus and then a second six week session commenced. The classes were taught by Julie Strabel, a retired Detroit Public School teacher, with assistance from Tamm Whitty, Lori Zurvalec, and artist volunteers from the community. The classes were free for the students and healthy snacks were provided.

To celebrate the end of the program, there was an exhibition of the students' work. Many thanks to Dave Hands who cut mats and backing for all the works so they could be displayed. Parents and students were invited to a Saturday afternoon reception that featured a pizza party. The students were given sketchbooks and pencils in a zipper case for use over the summer.

Tuesday Printmakers met most Tuesdays for printing work.

A three-day workshop held in conjunction with the Women's Caucus for the Arts, Michigan, and the Detroit Society of Women Painters & Sculptors was held in September.

A three day water-based mixed media workshop was held in October.

### **Poetry Sundays**

The Arts Ministry began including poetry in the Sunday service in November 2016. Poetry was incorporated into our worship on the second Sunday of each month in 2017. Thank you to Peter Caborn, Ronald Strickler, and Katherine Baetz for sharing poems they had written and to Wendy Evan, Kay Van DeGraaf, John Broman, and Carol LaChiusa for their readings.

It has been a pleasure to work with Director of Arts Ministry Tamm Whitty. I appreciate all her hard work and our planning/brainstorming sessions.

Enormous thanks to Moderator Ed Priebe who took the dream of an art gallery space at GPCC and made it an awesome reality through his determination and perseverance.

Respectfully submitted.

Lori Zurvalec,

Arts Ministry Committee Chairperson

## Deaf Community Ministry – Information for 2018 Annual Report

During the past year the Deaf Community Ministry Team applied for and was awarded an “Innovation Grant” from the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ in the amount of \$2,500! These funds will help the Ministry move into the next phase of “welcoming and inviting” members of the Deaf Community, their families and friends to join us for our monthly ASL interpreted service.

In an effort to reach out to the Deaf Community in our area – the ministry has been “branded” with an official name – Southeast Michigan Deaf Community Ministry! A ministry website and Facebook page are in process to help get the word out!

On the first Sunday of each month Paul Fugate continues to interpret the church service. We would like to thank our ASL Interpreting Team – Stacie Bush, Angela Guido and Kelly Niemiec for their ongoing work supporting the ministry and of course our Deaf Community Ambassador Debbie Wright!

Thank You for your continued support of this important New Beginnings initiative!

Paul Fugate



## Pastoral Relations Committee 2017 Annual Report

Current members of the Pastoral Relations Committee are:

- Jeri Gleichauf (Final Year)
- Katherine Baetz
- David Hands
- Peterson Decker

The committee met only once during the 2017 calendar year when a full evaluation of Pastor Richard for 2016 was done on February 12, 2017.

- Katherine and Jeri along with then Moderator Peterson Decker did a full performance evaluation with Pastor Richard on February 12, 2017, and the results of this review were submitted to the Board of Stewards for finalization.
- A September mid-year review was not held due to the length and time period of Pastor Richard's sabbatical.

Next scheduled meeting is February 18, 2018

Submitted by Jeri Gleichauf February 2, 2018

## Historian's Report

To save some costs as well as to give us a little more space in the Historian's bookcase in the library, we have combined our 3 albums ( Annual, Recognition, and Comments) into one 3 ring spiral notebook. They all fit well, are easier to access, and the notebook fits nicely in the bookcase. The 2017 notebook is completed.

My continued thanks to church members who have provided photos, letters, and news clippings. Emma Wright now assumes the Historian's position and I know you will continue to bring in all sorts of documents to fill our notebooks just as you have done for me.

Yours from an historical perspective,  
Tom Rockwell

## Columbarium Activities 2017

### Inurnments and Niches purchased

<u>Date of inurnment</u>	<u>Niche</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount Paid &amp; Date</u>	
	30	Peter & Sheila Gormley	\$750.00	3/2017
	113	Ed and Jane Lightfoot Gaffney	\$750.00	6/2017
	184	James & Louise Johnson	\$750.00	6/2017
Sept 12, 2017	118	Carolyn Wilson	\$750.00	7/2017

Scatterings – no scatterings

### COST FOR NICHE as of January 1, 2018 (will hold two containers of ashes)

Purchase Niche \$750      Single Bronze Plaque \$230      Double Plaque \$250  
 Open and close niche \$275      Install New Plaque \$25

### COSTS FOR SCATTERING

Single Plaque \$165      Maintenance \$350 each

Thanks to the Columbarium Committee, the Weeding Ladies who plant for us and Laurie Schmidt who makes my job easy.

Margaret Penirian, Chair

Anne Archer, Immediate Past Chair

Darlynne Pierzynski

David DeVries, Steward of Building and Grounds, Ex-officio member of Columbarium Committee

**Grosse Pointe Congregational Church**  
**Among Friends Report-2017**

**Among Friends** is a social group open to all adults at GPCC. Friends and extended family members are always welcome. If you haven't yet joined us for an event, please do come. Together we enjoy fellowship and have lots of fun.

The following events were held during the 2017 year:

**February:** A Super Bowl Party was held at the home of Frank and Roberta Turpin. What a fun evening; lots of food, beverage and fellowship.

**April:** A tour of the Piquette Plant. This is where Model T Fords were produced one at a time. There is so much history here! Dinner was enjoyed later at a local restaurant. Dick Hile and Kay Van De Graaf hosted this event.

**May:** Players: We laughed through 3 of the best plays at hisotirc Payers downtown. This evening was sponsored by Dave and Mary Johnson.

**June:** We had a wonderful afternoon at Dick Hile's cottage on Harsen's Island. We watched freighters going by, feasted on appetizers while some folks visited the Historical Museum. Later, many went on to have a fish dinner at San Souci Pub.

**September:** Our annual Among Friends Planning Party was held at the home of Skip and Martha Schwartzberg. We shared ideas, good food, fun, and fellowship.

**November:** Many joined the art exhibition "Call & Response: Poets & Artist in Dialogue". What an exciting event!

Respectfully submitted,

Skip and Martha Schwartzberg Co-coordinators

# Annual Report of the Ushers

Thanks to all the ushers who participated in serving our Congregation on Sundays and other special events.

We always have room for additional ushers. It is a wonderful way to meet other parishoners. Let me know if interested.

Regards, Alan Wright

## Current Ushers

Anderson, Gary	Leverenz, Dr. John
Baetz, Craig	Leverenz, Dr. John A.
Broman, John	McNeill, Alex
Caborn, Peter	Mikolajczak, John
Cammett, Stuart	Novak, Holden
Decker, Petersen	Novak, Mike
DeVries, David	Peppler, Gary
Fly, Amelia	Priebe, Ed
Fly, Ted	Rebant, Ron
Frakes, Jack	Rockwell, Tom
Fugate, Paul	Schwartzenburg, Skip
Gaffney, Ed	Sonnecken, Paul
Hands, David S	Strickler, Dr. Ron
Hawley, Rick	Tavalire, Aaron
Hogan, Kevin	Wei, Kuang-Chung
Horn, Philip	Wilson, Rick
Kopp, Dennis	Wright, Alan